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General Assembly

Sixty-sixth session

Official Records

36th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 19 October 2011, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Al-Nasser ..... (Qatar)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda items 9 and 14

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/66/3)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/66/263)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Note by the Secretariat (A/66/160)

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): In connection with agenda item 9, I would like to recall that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/316, of 1 July 2004, the Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 16 September 2011, to consider agenda item 9 in its entirety in plenary, on the understanding that the administrative, programme and budgetary aspects should be dealt with by the Fifth Committee.

At the same meeting, the Assembly took note of the clarification that, in implementing resolution 58/316 to consider item 9 in its entirety in plenary, the relevant parts of chapter I of the report that are under agenda items already allocated to the Main Committees will be considered by the Committee concerned for final action by the General Assembly.

In connection with agenda item 14, members will recall that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, the Assembly decided to consider under the item the chapters of the annual report of the Economic and Social Council relevant to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including through the participation in its discussions of the President of the Council.

I give the floor to the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, His Excellency Mr. Miloš Koterec, to introduce the report of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Koterec (Slovakia), Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council: I have the honour to introduce the 2011 report of the Economic and Social Council (A/66/3). Allow me to briefly summarize the highlights of the Council's work this year.

The 2011 annual ministerial review focused on the theme of education, which is closely related to the achievement of the United Nations economic, social and environmental development agenda. Indeed, the first goals set by the United Nations were related to education, arising from three regional conferences organized by UNESCO in the early 1960s. Fostering education at all levels has thus been at the heart of the development agenda from the very beginning.

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At the review, the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and his statement on the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) added a positive and challenging tone to the debate, which benefited from the participation of several heads of United Nations entities and of numerous ministers, other high-level officials, notably Mr. Gordon Brown and Ms. Micheline Calmy-Rey, President of Switzerland, and a record number of non-State actors — more than 1,400 — from various non-governmental organizations and businesses.

The segment emphasized the fact that the MDGs represent the minimum global standards for increasing access to education, whereas the "education for all" goals are more focused on improvements in delivery and learning. The segment also underscored the importance of better utilizing education resources to improve outcomes and quality, particularly teaching quality. Participants highlighted the potential of the annual ministerial review's voluntary national presentations in going beyond the MDGs, and stressed the need for the Council to focus on the post-2015 development framework.

Delegations adopted a ministerial declaration that articulates numerous educational challenges and elaborates action-oriented policy measures. Although this was not specifically reflected in the declaration, several speakers — including Mr. Brown, in his keynote address focusing on broken promises, broken dreams and broken trust — expressed strong support for augmenting resources, including by establishing a global fund for education.

Another proposal, by the Swiss President, Ms. Calmy-Rey, was the creation of a United Nations sustainable development council. The coordination segment reviewed the follow-up by the United Nations system to last year's ministerial declaration on gender equality and the empowerment of women and to the conference on Financing for Development. Participants welcomed the role played by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in the provision of technical support and the coordination of actions on gender equality.

The discussions also underlined the need for improved global economic governance, particularly with regard to the role of the United Nations system and the linkages with the Group of 20.

In the operational activities segment, participants voiced their expectations with respect to the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the General Assembly; reviewed the progress made in strengthening the United Nations Resident Coordinator system, and strategized on ways to strengthen the founding architecture of funds and programmes through the definition of "critical mass" of core resources.

The humanitarian affairs segment demonstrated the Council's capacity to react quickly to topical issues, including South Sudan and the current emergency situation in the Horn of Africa. The segment adopted a resolution that reaffirms the importance of access and humanitarian principles, and references cluster coordination as well as accountability and the need to include acceptance as part of security risk-management strategies.

The resolutions adopted by the Council at its general segment, which carries out an overview of the work of the Economic and Social Council's functional machinery, also attested to the Council's effectiveness in responding to contemporary challenges efficiently. In its resolution on South Sudan, which built on the Council's joint informal event with the Peacebuilding Commission, held on 13 June 2011, the Council decided to continue to monitor the development of that new country and its progress towards achieving the MDGs, in view of its special responsibility to ensure that the United Nations system support to the country is integrated and coordinated.

A significant achievement was the establishment of the new United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, which will bring together for the first time, at the global level, Government experts from all Member States to compile and disseminate best practices and experiences on geospatial information that is highly relevant in the context of sustainable development and humanitarian assistance.

On Haiti, the Council reviewed the report of its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti — a timely undertaking, given the need to maintain a high level of international support for the country while ensuring that political tensions do not hinder the reconstruction and development process.

Looking ahead, my experience as Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council has shown me that

the Council has made significant advances since the 2005 World Summit. It has indeed become a quality forum for debate. I would suggest that the major gap remains in its consideration of so-called hard-core economic issues, especially those of money and finance.

We have already set in motion preparations for the next annual ministerial review, which will focus on employment. As we all know, employment and decent work are fundamental to the achievement of the social and environmental development agenda of the United Nations, and ultimately to the sustainability of our planet in the long run. Past years' annual ministerial reviews have demonstrated that no true progress is achievable in any field — including education, gender equality, global public health and sustainable development — without the clear inclusion of employment in an action agenda.

I consider that next year's annual ministerial review will be a crucial element in building our shared knowledge of development imperatives. We must ensure that the recommendations of the previous years' reviews will be carried through. I urge Assembly members to engage fully in the national, regional and global preparatory activities to mobilize action for realization of the development vision of the United Nations.

Ms. Thakur (India): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's full support for the efforts to make the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly a success.

I wish to thank the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council for presenting the report of the Council (A/66/3) and for his encouraging leadership.

We have just heard about the important steps and actions that the Economic and Social Council has taken with regard to the global development agenda. The Council has an acknowledged role as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development. It has been singularly successful in promoting the integrated and coordinated implementation of the commitments made at the major United Nations conferences and summits.

Through the annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum, the Council has been able to review efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). And the focus of the annual ministerial review on one of those Goals has indeed helped to accelerate action on them.

The Economic and Social Council's annual ministerial review, held in July on the very important theme of "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education", helped us track achievements on MDG 2 and the Dakar Declaration on Education for All in a holistic manner. Overall, the Council session focused on promoting greater coherence between policy and development goals, and on making development partnership more effective, participatory and transparent.

We welcome the Council's oversight role vis-à-vis its commissions and committees, and we appreciate its recent decisions to take corrective action to maintain the sanctity of that global body.

We greatly appreciate the high-level policy dialogue that the Council has been promoting with the international financial and trade institutions on current developments in the world economy. This is of particular relevance in the present uncertain global economic scenario. There is clear recognition that global economic governance needs wider participation on the part of developing countries, especially in the decision-making structures of the Bretton Woods institutions. We are hopeful that the Council will play a proactive role in achieving this objective.

The United Nations conferences and summits held since the 1990s have generated an unprecedented global consensus on the need to pursue sustained, inclusive and equitable growth and development. If prosperity is not shared, there cannot be a just and equitable world. This imperative was emphatically reiterated at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), held in Turkey this year. The Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1), though an ambitious document, seeks only a minimal commitment from the global community. If we can give the LDCs a helping hand, they would be more than willing to run to the finish line.

The global economic crisis has not boded well for the MDGs. Accelerated action is needed to neutralize the reverses in poverty alleviation and other development goals. The least-developed countries,

which are the biggest laggards where the MDGs are concerned, need increased external support, including official development assistance (ODA), foreign direct investment and trade.

The linkages between the various United Nations development summits and conferences are strong and their synergies must be tapped. The Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States would derive immense benefits from a comprehensive, ambitious and equitable outcome of the climate change negotiations. Similarly, the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing, through the protection of biodiversity, have an important role to play in poverty eradication.

Multiple United Nations conferences and summits that focused on the attainment of internationally agreed development goals must, therefore, have a seamless, holistic and integrated working relationship with each other. The role of the Economic and Social Council in providing this important interface cannot be overemphasized.

With just four years to go until the MDG target year, follow-up action on all United Nations summits and conferences must be pushed. Global economic uncertainties should not become an excuse for inaction on our development agenda, all the more so as efforts to address the development deficit would give a boost to economic recovery.

A follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the Doha Review Conference on Financing for Development is fundamental to ensuring resources and the policy space that developing countries need to enable them to meet their socio-economic challenges. The 0.7 per cent ODA commitment must be met as soon as possible. Equally important is the need to ensure technology transfer and capacity-building for developing countries. We must give a renewed push to the Doha Development Round. At the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, we must ensure that the opportunity to return the sustainable development agenda to centre stage is fully exploited.

Over the years, the Economic and Social Council has played an important role in advancing a holistic and coordinated approach to global economic and social development, taking into account the interrelatedness of the various goals and targets of major United Nations conferences. We must work to make the Economic and Social Council even more meaningful than what was originally envisaged by the Charter of the United Nations and subsequently strengthened by various resolutions, particularly resolution 61/16.

Ms. Flores (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is grateful for the presentation of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 2011 (A/66/3), the resolutions approved, the description of the high-level meetings and the ministerial declaration adopted. Moreover, the work of its President, Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe, and of the Bureau that assisted him, has been commendable. Allow us to make a few brief reflections.

We wish to express our satisfaction to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the programme signed with our country. Special mention must be given to the humanist content of the report entitled "UNDP in Action 2010/2011: People-centred development", by UNDP Administrator Helen Clark.

Among the principle results of the specific UNDP programmes achieved in 2010 are the support for elections and reconstruction after crises and disasters. UNDP has helped more than 50 countries, including ours, to enact legislation, implement policies and create new institutions specifically designed to minimize the impact of natural disasters. Recently, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund approved the country programme for Honduras for the period 2012 to 2016.

It is no secret that despite the best efforts that have been made, many countries are still far from achieving the much desired Millennium Development Goals by 2015. My own country — with the exception of the targets relating to water supply, sanitation and nutrition — is included in that long list. The Honduran economy has grown at the average rate for Latin America. However, it would seem that we move from one crisis to another; we put out one fire and another flares up.

Sometimes our own domestic mistakes are to blame; other times, it is the negative results of external factors. Yesterday, it was the collapse of global financial systems; today, the collapse of the markets

that buy what little we sell. Tomorrow it will be anxiety, if not fear, because of the warning bells that drive the world's rickety economies to the brink of recession. We take small steps forward one day, followed by recurring episodes of bad news. It is painful not to be able to advance hopes for the immediate future when we are overwhelmed by the present emergency.

Just weeks ago we went to sleep with cautious hopes for a good harvest — and were abruptly awakened by water up to our necks. There was flooding throughout the country, with loss of lives, homes and roads. Infrastructure was damaged and hundreds were injured. Two days of torrential rains were all it took to declare once more a state of emergency. Add those and other recent misfortunes and setbacks to the tremendous accumulated social debt, and it is easy to see why more than half the population still lives in precarious situations.

We have made hardly any significant impact on the high levels of poverty in which more than half the population lives. While, compared to 2001 figures, there are approximately 7.5 per cent fewer Hondurans in extreme poverty, our achievement lies more in the depth of our commitment to what needs to be done than in the momentary relief through what has been achieved.

This is not a complaint or a rationalization asking for pity. It is simply the hard reality. It is a process we are used to: falling, getting up and dusting ourselves off. That is why it is sad that we have to admit that enormous gaps in equality persist. The mountain of problems does not seem to shrink. But that is the size of the challenge that we must face, with quiet determination to keep going.

The Plan for the Nation (2010-2022), adopted by the Government of integration and national reconciliation, is a beacon of hope. It includes reducing poverty and inequality as a priority, creating a national planning system and establishing a decentralized decision-making structure to define, manage and follow up on public policies.

In our fight to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, we must be more forceful in establishing policies for rapid job creation and increasing household incomes. We emphasize that a great many Hondurans who leave their homeland do so out of necessity, because they cannot find work that enables them to live in dignity. As long as the country does not offer ample opportunities, the wave of migration will continue, with the dismal consequences of grief and tragic stories of outrages, rape and vexations suffered by many of our emigrating compatriots, hundreds of whom have paid with their lives, in the corridors of death, for the dream of hope.

We look forward to the assistance of the UNDP Office in the national effort to reach the goals of the Plan for the Nation. It will help in gathering information, designing assessment and follow-up mechanisms, helping local mechanisms in public policy coherence and generating statistical data that will be helpful in designing inclusive social policies.

Recent international studies estimate that Honduras will suffer an increase in temperature, with resulting negative effects on agricultural activity and production in the countryside. A large part of our population is rural, with a subsistence economy. Research on agricultural vulnerability due to climate change is one of the tools being used to propose, with reliable data, risk management options that will lead to mitigation solutions.

While the work ahead of us is challenging, it would be unfair to deny the progress that has been made in the areas of democratic governance, national reconciliation, human rights, citizen security and the strengthening of the rule of law. We will continue to support reforms to eliminate barriers to women's participation in politics, in the economy and in the major role that is theirs in society, within the framework of our gender equality and equity plan.

We will continue technical cooperation with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal to promote political and electoral reforms that ensure transparency and efficiency in electoral processes, which are considered essential components for strengthening the Honduran democratic system.

Our commitment must be unwavering. We must not leave a heavy debt of obligations that we could resolve now for future generations to pay. Our will to bequeath a world of more dignified lives for our children and their children must be unshakeable, as must be too our desire to live and coexist in peace as brothers — which is what all the peoples of the world are.

Mr. Maksimychev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council for presenting the Council's report (A/66/3). I would also like to express my gratitude to the Secretariat for supporting the Council's work this year.

Russia attaches great importance to the work of the Council because it is the main coordinating body of the United Nations development system — a unique mechanism to harmonize the interests of different countries and a very important international forum in which to develop basic principles and thrusts of global economic, social and humanitarian cooperation.

We welcome the adoption of the multi-year programme of work for the annual ministerial reviews, in the context of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In 2012, Russia intends to put forward its national voluntary presentation on the reviews theme "Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals".

We commend the outcome of the Economic and Social Council session this year. The intense and effective work of the Council during its high-level segment strengthened the position of education among the priority issues on the United Nations social and economic agenda. It also gave powerful additional impetus to the coordinated work of the United Nations system in the area of education.

The segment's ministerial declaration set out the political context for further efforts at all levels, particularly in such key areas as increasing the quality of and expanding access to education; preparing and training qualified teachers and improving their working conditions; attracting and effectively using financial resources for education; and improving the system of vocational training to ensure progressive, comprehensive and fair economic growth based on full employment.

We note the Council's contribution to implementing the decisions reached at the 2009 United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development. In that regard, the Council reached an agreement on the basic principles to underpin the future work of the General Assembly by setting up a new advisory body to draft independent recommendations, including on the issue of international cooperation in the financial and economic spheres and the reform of the global economic regulatory system.

In 2011, the Council confirmed its key role in the process of intergovernmental follow-up to the various international conferences on financing for development. We welcome the outcome of the special high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. We also welcome the efforts of the President and Bureau of the Council to establish working contacts, in particular with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

One of the Council's future priorities should be to expand mutually beneficial cooperation between the United Nations and international financial and trade institutions, the private sector and non-governmental organizations so as to effectively implement the international development agenda.

The Russian Federation has consistently favoured strengthening the coordinating role of the Council as part of the United Nations system. In that regard, it is important to focus efforts on ensuring coherence between the work of the governing bodies of the United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies, and the overall efforts of the Council in the context of follow-up activities to the recommendations of the key social and economic bodies of the Organization. We call for capacity-building within the Council so that it is able to scrutinize the effectiveness of the specialized inter-agency bodies and the coordinating mechanisms of the Secretariat, including the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). It is important to set up effective mechanisms enabling Member States to periodically assess the work of the CEB from a policy point of view, adjust its priorities and set additional challenges for the Board so as to ensure the comprehensive and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

The Russian delegation has actively participated in the review of the implementation of resolution 61/16 on strengthening of the Economic and Social Council. The report on the topic submitted by the President of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly (see

A/65/866, annex) contains a range of useful recommendations that should be duly considered in the future work of the Council and the General Assembly.

In our opinion, one of the priorities of the review was to clarify the mandates of the separate segments of the Council's substantive session, in particular the coordination segment. Unfortunately, this and a range of other questions, including the possibility of optimizing the agenda and programme of work of the Council's substantive session, were hardly touched upon during the review. We deem it necessary to continue work in this area during the 2012 substantive session of the Council, bearing in mind the relevant conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary-General.

The Russian delegation is prepared to cooperate constructively with all partners in order to ensure the future strengthening of the Council, including considering the role of the United Nations in global economic governance.

Mr. Zdorov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank the leadership of the Economic and Social Council for presenting the report on the work of the Council (A/66/3). Belarus commends the work of the Council in the reporting period and recognizes the skilful leadership of the Ambassador of Zambia, Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe.

We believe that the Council was able to increase the practical significance of its high-level segment for the functioning of the United Nations system. We also welcome the choice of themes for discussion during that segment. In that regard, we would like to draw attention to the excellent quality of preparations for the Council's substantive session of 2011, during which Belarus presented its national report on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education.

We are convinced that discussing the national voluntary presentations on the achievement of the targets set under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a unique mechanism for mutual accountability and feedback. We therefore welcome this practice and are in favour of its continuation.

Belarus gained positive experience in implementing its education policy, which, in the opinion of the Council's President, could be used in other countries. We note, in particular, the value of further integrating Belarus' education strategies into the international education system.

We are in favour of strengthening the coordinating role of the Council in efforts to achieve the MDGs by 2015 and in further steps after 2015. We believe that these issues should be discussed as part of the annual ministerial reviews and the Development Cooperation Forum. One of the topics for the Council's 2013 annual ministerial review could be the preparation of the MDG agenda for the decade after 2015. It is crucially important that the international community step up efforts to achieve the MDGs on the basis of the principles of global partnership, including by implementing their development commitments.

We would like to draw attention to the need to establish a new energy architecture that will provide access to energy services and allow States to exchange modern energy technologies. This is also an important factor in achieving the MDGs.

We also believe that the impact of climate change must be taken into consideration in long-term strategies on financing for development and building a green economy.

We urge the Council to continue strengthening its coordinating role in the search for new and innovative development financing mechanisms and help developing and middle-income countries to integrate into the international economic and trade systems. We note, however, that the use of innovative approaches should not replace traditional forms of financing.

Belarus supports the practice of periodic reviews of operational activities for development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. In that regard, we welcome the forthcoming discussion in 2012 by the United Nations operational funds on their strategies to improve support to the least developed and middle-income countries.

Regarding the high-level meetings of the Council with the participation of the leaders of the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization, we believe that the practice of holding such meetings has proven successful and should be continued. At the same time, we suggest considering optimizing the agenda of the joint meetings so as to make them more productive. Belarus is also in favour of increasing the role of developing

and middle-income countries in the decision-making process of the governing bodies of the Bretton Woods institutions.

The main responsibility for ensuring that decisions adopted at the various United Nations conferences and summits are implemented lies with Member States and the specialized agencies of the United Nations. To successfully monitor the implementation of these decisions, it is particularly important to establish closer cooperation among the governing bodies of the United Nations system, including with the help of the Economic and Social Council.

Today, when the world is contending with serious economic difficulties, the work of the Council should focus with special intensity on solving Member States' urgent problems. Belarus intends to make its contribution to this task, including as a member of the Economic and Social Council if Member States support our country in the elections to this important United Nations entity.

Mr. Iziraren (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is happy to participate in today's meeting of the General Assembly to discuss the report of the Economic and Social Council for 2011 (A/66/3). I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Council, for the remarkable work he has done at its head. Today's discussion is testament to the synergy that should characterize relations between the Assembly and the Council, with the aim of promoting international economic and social cooperation on a harmonious and effective basis.

Through its activities, the Economic and Social Council makes a significant contribution to stimulating the debate on international cooperation so as to identify the best approaches and policies to advance and implement the United Nations development agenda. The report submitted to the Assembly and the various activities it discusses testify to the dynamism shown by the Council in its efforts to speed up progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, particularly the Millennium Development Goals.

While the Council's role in following up the outcomes of high-level conferences and meetings on social and economic development continues to be consolidated, more needs to be done to enable it to fully play its role as the main review and coordinating body of the United Nations for economic and social activities.

The annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum — new functions assigned to the Council at the 2005 World Summit — have become important gatherings for assessing progress made in achieving internationally agreed development goals, as well as those relating to international cooperation, in order to promote the necessary consensus among Members on how best to improve them.

Solving development problems today demands the participation of all actors — public, private, national, regional and international. The involvement in the Council's activities by representatives of civil society, the private sector and the academic and scientific worlds, and by United Nations institutions and other international organizations working alongside States, can only enhance its role as the chief international body entrusted with reviewing international cooperation in the areas of economic and social development.

The conjunction of every kind of crisis — financial, economic and food — and the exacerbations of climate change have begun to call into question some development gains. The countries most affected by these crises remain, notably, African and least-developed countries (LDCs), thereby presenting the international community with the moral obligation to strengthen its cooperation with those countries in order to help them achieve their development goals and overcome structural obstacles to their development.

In that regard, Morocco welcomes the fact that the Council decided to include in its annual ministerial review for 2015 the issue of follow-up to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, and that the Development Cooperation Forum will also address this issue when it reviews trends in international cooperation on development, as well as consistency in development policies.

Although the various crises that have arisen in recent years have posed major challenges to development and have tested international cooperation and multilateralism, they have also encouraged the international community to engage in constructive debate on global economic governance. The Economic and Social Council, which has been at the heart of that

debate, can in fact bring coherence and effectiveness to the process of making decisions with regard to global economic governance and to the implementation of those decisions.

Strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council in global economic governance first entails consolidating its work in coordinating with the other international institutions and forums involved in that governance, in order to ensure the consistency of decisions and actions taken to promote development.

Morocco, which pays special attention to the work of the Economic and Social Council, has always played a constructive role in that work and has supported the Council's efforts to achieve harmonious social and economic global development. As an expression of the priority accorded to its people's sustainable economic and social development, Morocco has, within the framework of the dynamic reforms instituted by His Majesty the King, moved forward with the creation of the National Economic, Social and Environmental Council as a constitutional body. His Majesty, who has always ensured that the consolidation of Morocco's democratic gains has proceeded alongside and in line with the sustainable human development of its people, emphasized at the establishment of the National Council that its task was to be an institution for good governance in development.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Morocco's willingness to continue to contribute constructively to the work of the Economic and Social Council, and to call on members to help strengthen the Council's role in global economic governance so as to better serve the cause of development.

Mr. Almeida (Brazil): The joint debate on the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/66/3) and the integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields constitutes an important opportunity to review the work undertaken during the past year and to prepare for the forthcoming discussions in General Assembly and beyond. We would like to place on record our appreciation for the leadership and dedication of the President of the Council, Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe, particularly during the Council's substantive session in July.

My delegation would also like to commend Ambassador Octavio Errázuriz, appointed by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session to facilitate the review of the implementation of resolution 61/16, which established the main elements of the current structure of the substantive session of the Council: the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) and the annual ministerial review, among other innovations.

As the principal body under the Charter for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development, including sustainable development, the Economic and Social Council plays a crucial role in the United Nations system. While we recognize that important initiatives have been undertaken over the past few years to improve the Council's inter-institutional and intergovernmental coordination, Brazil believes it is important to further strengthen the Council so that it can fully contribute to international policy discussions and deliberations on substantive issues relating to development. We believe that the report transmitted by the President of the Assembly in document A/65/866 offers a good basis for the review of the work of the Economic and Social Council to be conducted during the Assembly's sixty-seventh session.

The Council's current structure has its merits. The annual ministerial review has become an increasingly important event on the international agenda, capable of mobilizing ministers, high-level officials and special representatives from developing and developed countries alike to address key issues on the development agenda. It allows Member States to review progress on specific policy questions relevant to the international community, with a view to making concrete recommendations that can be acted on by national Governments. It rests on strong foundations and can count on solid achievements as it expands its work.

The Development Cooperation Forum is also an important venue for policy discussion and exchange of views on development cooperation. In order for the Forum to fulfil its potential, however, it needs to be further strengthened. In particular, we consider that the DCF should meet annually, instead of biennially as is currently mandated. Furthermore, we believe that the Forum's deliberations should be reflected in a negotiated outcome, not simply a Chair's summary.

We are convinced that the DCF can evolve into becoming the main forum for development

cooperation, addressing, in a comprehensive manner, issues such as official development assistance, South-South cooperation, philanthropy and new and emerging donors.

The intergovernmental follow-up mechanism to the financing for development process remains a key outstanding issue on the international agenda. While the multifaceted mechanism adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2009 was a step in the right direction, it falls short of what is needed to ensure the proper consideration of the financing for development agenda in the Economic and Social Council. As we have mentioned previously, we strongly favour the establishment of a functional commission on financing for development to follow up on the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development. In that regard, we believe that the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development in 2013 should consider, as a matter of priority, the institutional framework for Financing for Development with a view to redressing the current shortcomings.

On behalf of the Brazilian Government, I would like to take this opportunity to invite Member States to join us, at the highest level, for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development next June. In 1992, we adopted a landmark agreement in Rio de Janeiro, committing the international community to a consensus on sustainable development. In 2002, we decided on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to speed up delivery on those commitments. Next year, we must renew our joint determination and reaffirm our common commitment, while taking concrete steps to achieve sustainable development.

The Conference and its preparatory process will objectively assess the progress achieved so far and identify the gaps in implementation. We must address the new and emerging issues and establish solid foundations for cooperation for the future. Two issues highlighted by the General Assembly are a green economy, in the context of sustainable development, and poverty eradication, as well as the institutional framework for sustainable development.

The Conference will also take up other proposals to be put forth that might contribute to reinvigorating implementation, such as the adoption of sustainable development goals. As the host country and future Conference President, Brazil is committed to working with all Member States and all interested stakeholders to ensure that the Conference delivers on the growing expectations.

Mr. Diallo (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I have great pleasure in joining my voice to those of previous speakers to discharge the pleasant duty of conveying my sincere congratulations to our colleague and friend Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council, for the quality of his report (A/66/3). The document under consideration provides useful information on the importance of the Council's current activities, on the various decisions adopted and on some of the recommendations contained therein.

The emergence of a better, more peaceful and more prosperous world, free of all extreme forms of violence, will occur only with the ongoing promotion of sustained and inclusive economic and social development. In that regard, the Economic and Social Council, given its prerogatives, is certainly a key link in the United Nations system. The importance of the role entrusted to it within that context explains my country's great interest in the work of that renowned organ. That interest is particularly demonstrated by our active participation in the various activities of the Council.

By way of example, I would cite my country's recent involvement in the 2011 annual ministerial review, which made it possible to assess the efforts made by my country, Senegal, to implement its education policy and the challenges still facing it. Moreover, I take this opportunity to express my delegation's gratitude for the smooth running of that review and for the facilities granted to our country, both for the drafting of its national report and for its presentation. I also take this opportunity to thank Canada, France and Japan, which kindly agreed to be among the reviewing countries. May they realize, through my words, the gratitude of the Senegalese Government.

I would also like to underscore the benefit of that mechanism. It provides the opportunity not only to assess implementation of the decisions and recommendations made by the Economic and Social Council, but also to measure their impact on the development of States.

My delegation also calls on Member States to breathe new life into the Development Cooperation

Forum. That is another mechanism of the Economic and Social Council, which meets every two years and seeks to strengthen implementation of the United Nations development agenda.

Participants will agree with me that, despite all such mechanisms and areas of exchange established to improve the coordination activities of the Economic and Social Council, there remain, nonetheless, significant shortcomings. Indeed, it is highly regrettable to note that the Economic and Social Council really plays only a limited role in leading economic and social development activities.

Currently, development strategies that would indeed help to achieve the goal of combating poverty would benefit from being applied by bodies that are effective in economic and social terms. Such acknowledgement has led to a flourishing of ideas that have given rise to widespread resolve to continue and support the reforms already undertaken to further strengthen the powers of the Economic and Social Council and increase its profile.

On that basis, my delegation welcomes the considerable progress already made, in particular, the significant reforms embarked on during the 2005 World Summit, as well as the adoption of resolution 61/16, by which the General Assembly stated its intent to continue those reforms.

With that in mind, my delegation believes that the focus should be placed, as a priority, on strengthening the Council's powers, improving its relations with the other United Nations organs, and clarifying their various mandates. That would certainly enable the Economic and Social Council to fully fulfil its coordinating role, to serve as a credible decision-making body and, in short, to play a truly dynamic role.

In order to increase its effectiveness, the Council would also benefit from being placed at the heart of global economic governance, and, furthermore, given its agenda, it should increase the number of its meetings, both on global issues and on particular topics.

In that regard, participation on the part of the Organization's subsidiary bodies in the annual ministerial review, as well as the Council's greater involvement in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, are also areas, among others, that could be explored. In that context, I would like to propose to the Economic and Social Council the idea of considering a follow-up meeting to the 2010 Summit on the Millennium Development Goals.

The importance of operational activities within the United Nations system has led to a greater number of institutions and to overlapping development activities, thus creating real coordination difficulties. That is why, in order to ensure a functioning, balanced and coherent system, the links between the Economic and Social Council and the various United Nations funds and programmes should be re-examined.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the last speaker on agenda items 9 and 14. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of those two agenda items.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.